OKLAHOMA
AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT
STATION
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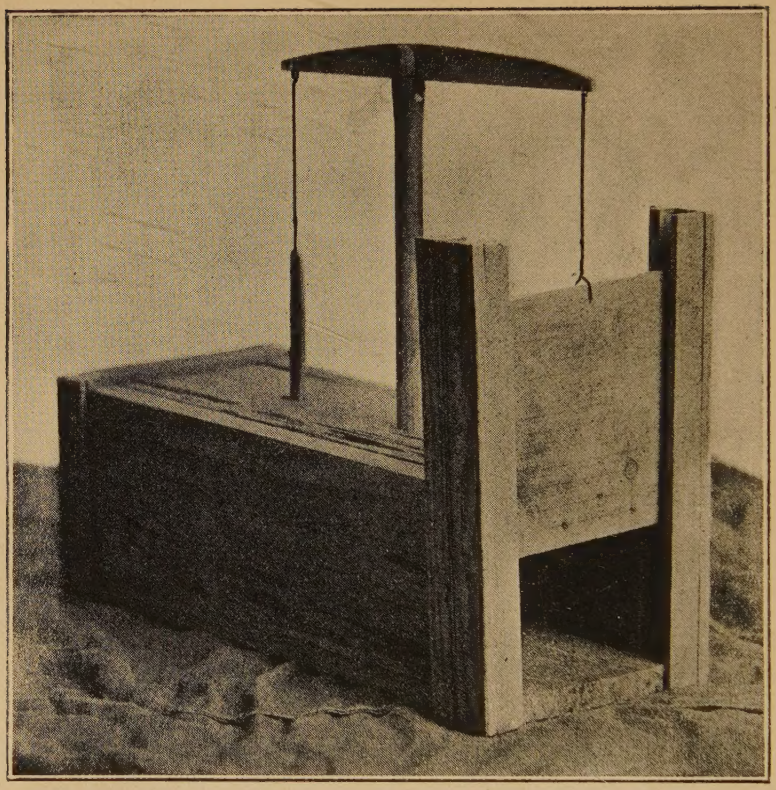
PROTECTING TREES FROM RABBITS

Rabbits are very particular as to what they eat, and feed only on vegetable matter. They prefer the more succulent kinds, such as vegtables, clover, alfalfa, fallen fruit, etc. When none of these foods are available they often eat the bark of trees, especially when snow covers other food.

It is very easy to prevent rabbits from injuring trees, and all cases of damage are due to neglect rather than to a lack of efficient remedies. A number of preventives, all of which are efficacious are given below.

Your premises should not afford hiding places for rabbits, such as briar patches, brush piles, etc. This is not meant to include green cover crops in the orchard; as is stated above, green and succulent food is preferred by the rabbits and an orchard with a cover crop above the snow is seldom if ever injured.

Trapping—Traps, such as is shown in the illustration, are very effective in catching rabbits. The more traps you have so much the better. This is not so economical a method as poisoning for protecting the trees, but it furnishes amusement for the children and also provides some meat for the table. This trap is constructed of four one-inch boards, eight inches wide and two feet long. Old lumber is preferable to new. These are nailed together forming an oblong box; the rear end is closed by a board. The front is provided with a drop door, which slides in a groove formed on upright strips on each side. It is well to have these strips with the groove extend well above the top of the trap to prevent the door from tilting, otherwise sometimes the door may not drop. A hole is bored in the top of the trap near the ter, in which is fastended the upright trigger support. A second hole is bored in the trap about four inches from the back end. A groove is



cut in the top of the trigger support in which the horizontal arm is fastened by a pin. The length of this arm should be the distance from the rear hole to the front of the trap. The front end of the arm is fastened to the door by a string and the rear end is fastened by a string to a stick about twelve inches long with a notch cut in the front side. The trap is set by raising the door and passing this stick in the rear hole and catching it on the front edge of the hole. The bait is placed on the floor in the rear part of the trap, so that when the rabbit goes back to get the food he will throw the trap.

Poisoning—There are two general ways of poisoning rabbits, namely: (1) by placing poisoned water in their runs, especially during dry weather; (2) by placing poisoned food where they can get it. The following, which was originally recommended by the Ohio Experiment Station, has given good satisfaction: One part sulphate of strychnia, one-third part borax, one part white syrup, ten parts water. Shake well and apply to tender twigs with brush or by dipping, and distribute the poisoned twigs around the trees.

Tree Protectors—Where the planting is valuable enough to justify the expense, a woven wire fence is desirable, as it will exclude the rabbits. However, this is practicable only in special cases.

Wire window screening is frequently used and is cut into strips ghteen to twenty-four inches long and nine to twelve inches wide. his is put around the trunks of the trees in the form of tubes, with the w r end pressed into the ground. This tube is tied with wire.

Wooden veneer strips of about the same dimensions as the wire reen give good results. They should be soaked in water before at- mpting to fold them around the trunk of the trees. Wire is best for ing them, as it is durable and does not necessitate renewing. These rips may be purchased of basket factories. Two firms which adver- se in our Horticultural journals are "The St. Louis Basket & Box o., St. Louis, Mo.," and "The Burlington Basket Co., Burlington, owa."

Corn stalks, building paper, and common wrapping paper are me of the other things frequently used. They are efficacious if pplied in such a manner that they prevent the rabbit from getting his outh to the bark of the trees.

Washes—There have been a number of washes and paints of vari- us kinds recommended as being effective against rabbits. The dis- dvantage of these washes is that heavy rains wash them off and make necessary to repeat the application. It is not difficult to find or de- ise preparations which will keep rabbits away. Rabbits are very par- cular about their food and any taint on the tree will keep them from njuring it. On this account hog intestines and other cheap meat prod- cts rubbed on the trees have given good results. They will be effect- e as long as the taint remains on the tree and no longer.

The following preparation has been recommended by this Station the past and found very satisfactory: "Water, one gallon; one ound of soap; two to four ounces of carbolic acid. Some prefer to dd enough vermillion red to give the mixture a good pink color and ne consistency of cream. This is painted on the trunk of the trees in ne fall, with a bush or a swab of rags tied to a stick.

Another wash, which has given considerable satisfaction, is made y slaking one peck of fresh stone lime with soap suds. Thin to the nsistency of whitewash, add one-half gallon of crude carbolic acid, ur pounds of sulphur and one gallon of soft soap. Paint the trunks f the trees as before in the autumn.

The United States Department of Agriculture recommends the me-sulphur wash as having given thoroughly satisfactorily results. his wash consists of: Unslaked lime, twenty pounds; flowers of sul- hur, fifteen pounds; water, fifty gallons. The lime, sulphur and one- ird of the water are boiled together for one hour, and then the rest f the water is added. By adding salt the wash will stick better.

The Arkansas Experiment Station has found that painting the unks of trees in the fall with white lead and linseed oil gave very tisfactory results. Mixed paints should not be substituted for the ove, as they may contain oils which would injure the trees. One ad- antage of this mixture is that one application is sufficient to last the tire season.

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